

Update



Success Behind the Scenes

by: George C. Grisaffe

Have you ever noticed the camaraderie among college players on the basketball court? In the spirit of competition, players applaud their teammates, it does not matter whether they are watching a winning basket or a missed free throw. The effort expended is worthy of support and recognition. Here is a case of a slam dunk.

The team players were: Scott Burns, Senior Contract Specialist and Small Business Program Manager; Pauletta Johnson, Contract Specialist; Ken Legg, Director, Division of Engineering and Planning; Joe Malinovsky, Director, Division of Acquisition, Property, and Environmental Management; Carlos Valencia, General Engineer; and Larry Yadon, General Counsel.

In October 1998, Southwestern Power Administration (Southwestern) received ten bids in response to a disconnect switch replacement project. Pauletta Johnson started the ball rolling by conducting discussions with prospective vendors and developing the proper documentation which facilitated the second phase of the project. Acting in accordance with Federal acquisition regulations Valencia and Burns requested, obtained, and compiled the appropriate information necessary to determine if the low bidder was qualified to serve as a Government contractor.

They reviewed and rated the following factors: management personnel, technical capability, production capability, performance record on prior

and current contracts, quality assurance program and procedures, financial capability, equal opportunity policy, ability to meet the required completion date, and facilities and equipment.

While it is important that Govern-

from the low bidder lacked certain elements of responsibility, and hence, was not qualified to receive an award for the project.

In early November 1998, the team referred



Starting lineup — Johnson, Burns, Legg, Yadon and Valencia

ment purchases be made at the lowest price, this does not require an award to a contractor solely because they submit the lowest offer. A prospective contractor must affirmatively demonstrate its responsibility, including, when necessary, the responsibility of its proposed subcontractor(s). It is Government policy that awards will be made only to responsible contractors.

After team evaluation, it was determined that the responsive bid

this non-responsibility determination to the U.S Small Business Administration (SBA) in New York City. This determination was supported by a report with over 20 enclosures which included correspondence between Southwestern and the contractor, and reports

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Southwestern Update

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The UPDATE is published quarterly by and for customers, retirees, employees and contract employees of Southwestern Power Administration like:



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Special thanks to:

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DeAnn Rhea
Sharren Ripley
Jim Sherwood
Gary Swartzlander
Mike Wheat
Jan Woolverton
Larry Yadon

Current pinion

The Challenge of Change

by Barbara Otte

Another year has passed and, I imagine, if your year has been anything like mine, you are probably ready to say "Stop the merry-go-round, I want to get off." Change is occurring so rapidly, it almost makes you afraid to blink.

For Southwestern and its employees, this past year has been one of ongoing and fast-paced change and sometimes overwhelming opportunities. Budget cuts, utility industry restructuring, major weather-related incidents, additional regulatory requirements, etc. have presented us with sometimes insurmountable challenges and yet, we seem to be able to work together very effectively to address them.



As a product of the 'baby-boomer generation," I thought I was well-equipped to adjust to change as it took place. That is not always the case. I find that frequently my initial reaction is to resist change, looking for ways to keep the status quo. I'm finding, though, that resistance isn't the greatest approach, because sometimes change occurs even without you.

It's been quite a learning experience, but I'm finding that being an integral part of change and examining it for what it is — an opportunity to evaluate the status quo and look for ways to make it better — has opened doors, both personally and professionally.

Southwestern has been confronted with innumerable challenges this past year. Based on our accomplishments, it is apparent that we, as an agency, are primed to approach change head-on.

I look forward to working with you in 1999 to meet the challenges Southwestern will face and to position ourselves as a significant player in the electric utility industry as we move towards the next millennium.



Barbara Otte

The ABCs of Accounting

by Gary Swartzlander

As Southwestern made the decision to update its financial system with Oracle, there were some management questions that needed to be answered about the agency's costing system. Specifically, the four questions asked were:

- Given Southwestern performance targets and priorities, is the right proportion of resources being applied to different activities?

- How does Southwestern's cost to perform various processes and activities compare to other utilities and other government agencies?

- Are there opportunities for process improvement based on best practices?

- With unbundling of rates and tariffs, do the costs assigned to Southwestern's services closely reflect the work performed to support those services?

The Government Performance and Results Act requires performance-based budgeting. To effectively implement it and answer management's questions, it became apparent that Southwestern needed the ability to capture costs at a level

other than the organization and object code level. The answer was an activity-based costing/management system (ABC).

Maintenance has been using an ABC system in its Maintenance Management Information System for a number of years. Maintenance personnel track their time at an activity level.



Oracle team focused on success

Under Southwestern's new ABC system, all employees, both Federal and contractor, will account for all time and expenses by activity effective February 14, 1999.

A team comprised of Scott Burns, Jerry Johnson, Doug Johnson, Sharon Warden, Gary Hayter, Perry Henson, Jim Jennings, Gary Swartzlander and Price Waterhouse consultants worked with Southwestern managers and key personnel to create a list of activities applicable to Southwestern utility business. In total 186 activities were identified by the team. 💧

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for the contractor and its principal subcontractor from Dun & Bradstreet.

The SBA has the authority to issue a Certificate of Competency (COC) certifying all elements of responsibility. SBA did not issue a COC. This was a first occurrence for Southwestern. The many hours of hard work by the team paid off, and Southwestern went on to award the contract to a responsible contractor at a fair and reasonable price.

The last time SBA granted a COC to a contractor that Southwestern considered to be unqualified and ineligible for award, the contract had to be terminated and the requirement had to be completed by another small business. The effort associated with the termination and reprocurement was very time consuming and costly to Southwestern during the existing Agency budget reductions.

This example parallels the teamwork in awarding contracts between certain engineering and procurement personnel over the past year. The two Division Directors' unconditional support of the contracting and engineering efforts during this exercise was appreciated and extended beyond mere reinforcement. More important, it increased the desire to be on the winning team, and confirmed there are many valued and empowered players on the court of business life at Southwestern. 💧

Area Leadership Attend Third Hydro Conference

by Ted Coombes, Jake Gage and Barbara Otte



Colonel Crear and Bethel Herrold



Colonel Crear and Ted Coombes



Colonel Crear and Mike Deihl

The third Southwestern Federal Hydropower Conference was held January 20 and 21 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Among those in attendance were Col. Robert Crear, Commander of the Vicksburg District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps); Col. Thomas A. Holden, Jr., Commander of the Corps' Little Rock District, Administrator Michael Deihl, Southwestern Power Administration (Southwestern), Craig Chapman, Office of the Corps' Chief of Engineers office, and Ted Coombes, Executive Director of the Southwestern Power Resources Association (SPRA).

Following a welcome by host Colonel Crear, Mike Deihl addressed the attendees. He stated that the electric utility industry is in a time of extensive change at the same time that Federal agencies such as the Corps and Southwestern are being asked to make do with less. He noted that issues such as the Southwest Power Pool Tariff and Integrated System Operations, along with budget issues, will force agencies to continue to find ways to work smarter.

One of the main topics of discussion at the conference was the so-called "Y2K" problem, caused by computer programs and embedded microchips that might interpret January 1, 2000 as January 1, 1900. All conference participants reported satisfactory progress toward certifying their systems as "Y2K compliant."

Restructuring in the electric utility industry was also addressed. SPRA's

Ted Coombes gave an overview of recent and potential changes in industry and regulatory practices and the effects of these changes on Southwestern and its customers. Larry Watson, general manager of Paragould (AR) City Light and Water, gave the municipal utilities' perspective of these changes, while Dennis Wright of Associated Electric Cooperative reported on impacts particularly affecting co-ops.

In closing, Colonel Crear expressed his gratitude to organizers of the conference and his appreciation at having the opportunity to get to know "who the hydropower players are and what their needs are." Mike Deihl reemphasized that changes are occurring, but that the need for stewardship of resources has not changed. There is an obligation to perform work in the least costly manner.

The Corps' Little Rock District will serve as host for the next conference, tentatively scheduled for August. 💧

Corps of the New Millennium

by Sharren Ripley

Two 49ers and one 29er are leaders in sharing the same vision for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' role in the 21st Century:

In February 1997 Lieutenant General Joe N. Ballard, 49th Chief of Engineers and Commander, led the Corps in updating their vision for the future.

At the next echelon, Brigadier General Edwin J. Arnold, Jr., the 29th Commander and Division Engineer, Southwestern Division, is heeding the call at the Southwestern Division.

Colonel Thomas A. Holden Jr., the 49th Commander of the Little Rock District, is mustering his troops to fulfill their part of the challenge.

Commissioned in the Corps of Engineers in 1975, Colonel Thomas A. Holden Jr. was pleased to accept his latest Corps assignment in July 1998. A graduate of West Point who has served in a variety of assignments overseas and in the United States, this 49er is eminently qualified to prepare the Little Rock District Office for the future.

As part of the process, a master strategy has been developed by the Corps which has three goals: Revolutionize effectiveness; Seek growth opportunities; and Invest in people. Colonel Holden has made these goals top priority for Little Rock District.

During his tenure, Holden plans to implement the mission envisioned by his higher authority in part by moving the Little Rock organization to best meet that mission by enhancing customer focus; developing internal resources to meet future requirements, whatever they may be; and assuring they don't adopt an "If it isn't broke, then we won't fix it" mode.

One of the major efforts related to Southwestern and its customers is the recently established semi-annual

Southwestern Power Resources Association, Corps, and Southwestern customer conferences. The Colonel had his first opportunity to attend one of these conferences in January.

He commented, "It's good dialogue between us and the users on how projects are utilized and enables us to listen to customer concerns when we are working on critical decisions that may impact them. It helps us explain our policy and the regulatory environment we operate in and so that they will understand our constraints. It also helps the customers and Southwestern surface their areas of concern to us so that we can work through to a right solution for all of us."

Holden is leading the 700+ employee, \$164 million per year business in developing a workforce capable of handling projects over the next five to eight years. For example, regional teams are now a way of doing business in the Southwestern Division.

"Sharing" work between districts helps to spread the division's workload between its districts and keeps employees from having to be geographically relocated to where the work is. It also helps meet customer's needs by offering them the best possible service from subject matter experts, regardless of their location. With its excellent leadership, Little Rock is well prepared to face the future. 💧



Lt. Gen. Joe N. Ballard



Brig. Gen. Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.



Col. Thomas A. Holden, Jr.

A PRIMER ON RESTRUCTURING

By Laurence Yadon

Three trends in the utility industry are collectively known as restructuring.

CONSOLIDATION

There are three trends towards consolidation in the electrical utility industry. First, the merger among Electric Companies, as demonstrated by the pending merger of Central and Southwest (CSW) and American Electric Power of Ohio. That proposal, now before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, could have a significant impact on this region.

Second, control over transmission is being consolidated around the country through the development of region wide tariffs, such as the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) open access tariff and the emergence of Independent System Operators (ISOs) which are designed to manage all transmission transactions on behalf of member utilities in a particular region.

Third, the traditional utility industry structure has been modified in recent years to accommodate increased non-utility generation of power and the creation of power marketers who are beginning to sell electricity for retail consumption. This is somewhat comparable to MCI and Sprint delivering long distance service over Southwestern Bell telephone lines.

These developments have been paralleled by proposals to eliminate or modify legislation which established the structure of electric utility services during the New Deal era.

DEREGULATION

In 1935, three nationwide holding companies controlled nearly all electricity generation in the United States. Congress reacted by passing the Public Utility Holding Company Act (PUHCA) of 1935, which facilitated the creation of vertically integrated utility systems serving particular geographic areas. For example, Public Service Company and Oklahoma Gas and Electric market electricity to consumers not served by municipalities or rural electric cooperatives in the State of Oklahoma.

Congress sought to partially address the generation problem in 1978 by passage of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act, (PURPA) which, in part, sought to stimulate

non-traditional generation by requiring utilities to buy electricity produced from cogeneration .

Beyond this, due to continuing constraints in transmission systems i.e. congestion, Congress provided in Section 211 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 that transmission customers could apply to the FERC for orders requiring transmission providers to allow transmission access for customers who can show compelling need for access. Southwestern is subject to Section 211 but has never been requested to provide transmission under this law. On the other hand, Southeastern, (which has no transmission) has used Section 211 to obtain service in several instances.

Finally, the FERC mandated the development of open access tariffs in its Orders 888 and 889. Order 888 has had three significant impacts on Southwestern.

First

Although Southwestern is technically exempt from Order 888, the Deputy Secretary of Energy directed that the power marketing administrations file tariffs complying with open access, to the extent allowed by law. Thus, Southwestern filed a tariff covering its relatively small number of non-federal transactions. This tariff was approved in May 1998. Fortunately, Southwestern has been

exempted from the normal requirement that transmission personnel be separated from generation personnel, known in the industry as functional unbundling. FERC allowed a waiver of this requirement due to the significant expense which would be involved in unbundling operations for the relatively small number of non-federal transactions handled.

Second

The impact of Order 888 has been South-western's participation in the SPP regional tariff for short term non-federal transmission sales and potential participation in a revised tariff which would include long term non-federal transmission sales.

Third

Southwestern is participating in the development of a structure whereby SPP will become an ISO. An ISO controls all (or most) load across an entire region. Full Southwestern participation will depend on the development of appropriate provisions protecting ability to fulfill statutory obligations.

RETAIL WHEELING

Retail wheeling generally refers to systems in which retail customers have the opportunity to choose among energy suppliers in much the same way that consumers now choose long distance suppliers. Retail wheeling is being studied and tried on an experimental basis across the country. The jury is out on whether it will immediately save consumers money or is even a good idea in the long run.

The federal government will have a significant role in designing the shape of retail wheeling, because many electricity transactions involve interstate commerce. Under the United States Constitution, Congress may regulate commerce flowing between states. Generally, proposed federal legislation on retail wheeling has reflected three approaches.

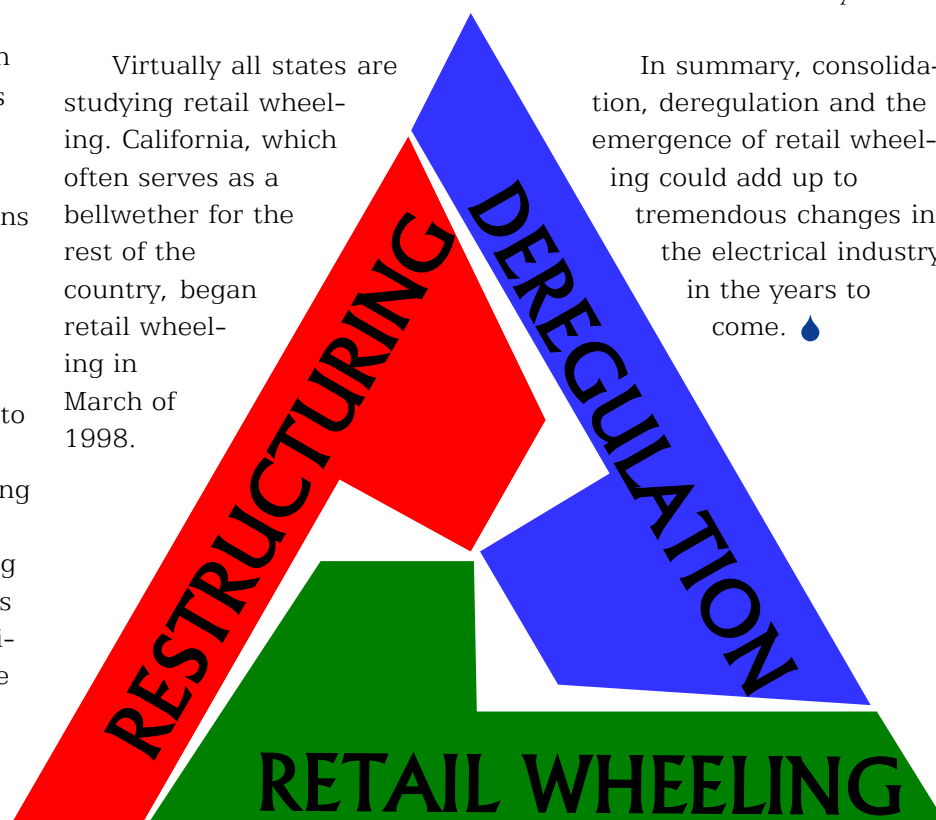
Some have proposed that the federal government take a hands-off approach, letting each state decide the retail wheeling question on its own. At the other end of the spectrum, others have proposed that the federal government require each state to allow its consumers the retail wheeling option. Between these two alternatives is an approach which would mandate retail wheeling but allow the individual states to "Opt Out" under certain circumstances.

Virtually all states are studying retail wheeling. California, which often serves as a bellwether for the rest of the country, began retail wheeling in March of 1998.

Oklahoma law has mandated that retail wheeling begin by July of 2002. The Oklahoma Corporation Commission is scheduled to recommend restructuring steps in 1999.

A Public Service Commission-approved retail wheeling experiment is underway in Missouri, and a committee of the Arkansas legislature reported in January as to its future in that state. Texas is also considering a plan to begin retail wheeling sometime this year while a Kansas task force is considering the problem. Meanwhile, the Louisiana Public Service Commission has decided that retail wheeling deserves further study.

In summary, consolidation, deregulation and the emergence of retail wheeling could add up to tremendous changes in the electrical industry in the years to come. 💧



Emerging Millennium, Task for Emergency Team

by Joe Durham and Sharon King

On February 1, Administrator Mike Deihl and senior staffers signed the charter authorizing the formation of the "Y2K Business Continuity and Contingency Planning Team". This team is responsible for continuing the process, which began in 1998, of developing and updating plans to ensure that Southwestern's essential operations continue to function at an acceptable level should there be disruptions triggered by Year 2000 (Y2K) generated events.

The team is also responsible for developing and overseeing exercises to test Southwestern's ability to respond rapidly and effectively to events which could potentially disrupt normal operations. The first of these exercises will be held this spring and will involve the Y2K planning team as well as a yet-to-be-defined "Emergency Response Team" (ERT). The ERT will consist of members from several different Southwestern offices including operations, maintenance, finance and accounting, procurement, engineering and the Public Affairs Office.

"Eventually I see everyone in the agency

having some role to play during major disruptions," says engineer Joe Durham, leader of the planning team. "The best example I can think of is based upon my experiences in the Navy aboard an aircraft carrier. Everyone had to literally wear two different hats depending upon the operational status of the ship, one for 'normal'

Electric Reliability Council and the Southwest Power Pool on April 9, 1999. This date is the 99th day of 1999, one of several identified as being susceptible to computer software "glitches."

Southwestern is also planning two other exercises, one in September,



operations and another for 'emergency' operations such as battle stations or disaster control."

Joe went on to say that the exercise will involve some of Southwestern's major stakeholders (including the Corps of Engineers) and customers. The first exercise at Southwestern will precede one to be conducted by the North American

1999 and a final drill in December of 1999. Anyone interested in obtaining more information about Southwestern's Y2K contingency planning or exercises should contact either Joe Durham at 918 595-7506 (E-mail: durham@swpa.gov) or Jerry Martin at 918 595-6694 (E-mail: jmartin@swpa.gov). 💧



Southwestern Remembers Power Marketing's Walt Bowers

Walter Bowers, Southwestern retiree, died on January 12, 1999. Walt served in many capacities during his 37 years at Southwestern. He began his service in 1950 as an Hydraulic Engineer and through the years served as a Public Utilities Specialist, ADP Systems Manager and Supervisory General Engineer. Walt received the Department of Energy's Meritorious Service Award in 1983 for his integrity, leadership and quality of work. At the time of his retirement in 1987, he held the position of Assistant Administrator, Power Marketing. Walt was a highly respected individual, mentor to many and friend to all. His extensive knowledge and experience were invaluable to the agency. He was a man of faith who loved his family, music, sports and life. Walt is survived by Louise (better known as Kitten), his wife of 51 years; son, Walter Bowers, Jr., daughter, Janis Myers and nine grandchildren.

Information Resources Key to Efficiency

by DeAnn Rhea and Jim Sherwood

The decisions made by the Information Resources Management (IRM) Division and Information Resources Management Committee (IRMC) will increase Southwestern's "How We Do Business" efficiency. For example, standardizing some programs, or specific versions, will increase compatibility and employee familiarization while reducing licensing and maintenance costs.

within the rapidly changing electric and computer industries.

The IRMC Chairperson is Jim Sherwood, IRM Division Director. Committee members will meet monthly with special sessions held as needed. Quarterly progress reports

will be submitted.

All cross-organizational computer applications will be reviewed to determine the best ones for mission objectives.

On December 9, 1998, Southwestern's Administrator, Mike Deihl, and other members of Senior Staff approved a charter for the IRMC. Its primary role is to support the IRM Division, which is responsible for providing and supporting the hardware and software that Southwestern needs to efficiently perform its mission requirements. Some of the major IRM-related projects/applications include: Intranet, Internet, and Financial and Personnel Systems.

The secondary role is to provide a forum for cross-organizational input into decisions made by the IRM Division within its available resources and

A Technical Working Group has been formed for the implementation of Southwestern's

Intranet and to conduct technical reviews on behalf of the IRM Committee. All cross-organizational computer applications will be reviewed to determine the best ones for mission objectives.

The overall goal of the IRM Division and Committee is to increase Southwestern's effective use of an ever-shrinking budget resource while serving the needs of employees and customers. 💧

Harold Lewis Retires

by Sharren Ripley

A Southwestern power dispatcher for 30 years, Harold Lewis began his employment on June 5, 1967, in Jonesboro, Arkansas. After six years, he was transferred to the Springfield Operations Office where he retired on January 2, 1999.

Previous to Southwestern, Lewis worked as a power dispatcher four years for the City of Los Angeles, six years for the City of Anaheim, California and a short time for Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Springfield, Missouri.

Looking back over the years, most memorable to him were how kind and considerate the employees had always been. After arriving at Jonesboro in 1967, Lewis said, "They all came out and helped us move in and arrange all our furnishings. The line crew foreman introduced me to a banker. If you worked for the Federal government, you were very special in Jonesboro at



Harold Lewis receives a Certificate of Service from Bob Inman.

that time. He told me to find a house and tell him how much money I needed. So I found a house and told him I needed \$700 to get into it. He handed me seven \$100 bills and said "just pay it back when you can."

Recalling two devastating tornados while in Jonesboro, one in '68 and one in '73. Lewis said, "We jumped in to help the customers. We did everything that we could for them and had all the crews come in to help. We have always done that with any municipality that suffers a disaster. Southwestern has always been there to help, and it remains true today."

Asked about working with the customers, the dispatcher replied, "They have been very cooperative over the years."

After a January 7 retirement party, he and his wife Helen plan to travel, fish, and spend lots of time with four children and five grandchildren. 💧



A Tribute to Billie Johannsen

Billie Johannsen, who started her career at Southwestern as a temporary clerk-typist in 1967 and retired as a Public Utilities Specialist in 1995, passed away on January 13, 1999. The following is a tribute to Billie from co-worker Jan Woolverton:

Probably the best thing that I can say about Billie Johannsen is that she was my friend. She was one of the first people I met here at SPA (that's the old version of SWPA). Billie and Sue Shamburg took me, the new kid, under their wings and made sure that I knew the scoop. Billie was the kind of person who really cared about others. She could tell you where most of SPA's employees came from, whom they were married to, how many children and grandchildren there were, and which ladder to success each person had taken. She also had a wealth of knowledge of rates and repayment that comes with many years of experience. She took great pride in her position in rates and in her working relationship with all of her co-workers. Billie took genuine interest in the needs of others and was never too busy to take time for them. Professionally, I witnessed her and Gene Reeves spending hours doggedly trying to work out the infamous purchased power deferral account to make sure that each customer received equal treatment on their specific credits. Personally, Billie and her family took me into their hearts and into their home as if I were a member of their family. That was Billie Sue Johannsen. She was my dear friend.



Educating Southwestern

by Sharon King

Southwestern's Fiscal Year 1999 training plan is in full swing; four of the twelve monthly sessions have taken place since the last issue of the Update, each with a different topic and focus.

On November 2, General Counsel Larry Yadon presented the session on restructuring in the utility industry. He gave an overview of three interrelated trends in the industry which together comprise restructuring. These include consolidation, deregulation and retail wheeling. His analysis of these trends helped employees better understand the profound changes taking place and their possible effect on Southwestern.

On December 7, Administrator Mike Deihl explained to employees the Independent System Operator, the Southwest Power Pool and the North American Electric Reliability Council . . . their histories, their functions and how they relate to Southwestern.

The January 4 session was an overview of Southwestern's system, including generation and transmission, presented by Assistant Administrator Gene Reeves. The interface between Southwestern and the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) was explained;

how Southwestern's transmission facilities and the Corps' generation facilities work together to fulfill the mission of Southwestern.

On February 1, Barbara Otte, Acting Director, Division of Rates and Repayment, gave an explanation of the rates and repayment process as well as the history of Southwestern's use of



Words of wisdom from Gene Reeves

the Continuing Fund. Public Utilities Specialists Darrell Gilliam and Jerry Martin explained how the Customer Service Division acts as a direct line to Southwestern customers, as well as interacting with all Southwestern divisions and employees.

These educational sessions are helping Southwestern employees better understand the changes impacting the electrical utility industry and the influences which other entities have on Southwestern's mission. 💧

news in brief

SURF THE SYSTEM www.swpa.gov

To communicate with you more frequently, efficiently, and at a lower cost, we are using this resource to keep you updated on the latest information related to Southwestern. Please visit often.

THE FRUGAL PMA TRAVEL SAVINGS

In FY 1998, the first year of its existence, the Travel Savings Award Program netted \$5,000 for Southwestern. Motivated by opportunities for cash in their pockets, travelers searched for economical lodging.

By paying less for lodging than the allowable rate, travelers earned cash awards while at the same time decreasing Southwestern's spending.

SOUTHWESTERN CARES by DeAnn Rhea

As far back as I can remember Southwestern has been collecting from employees who travel, the hotel complimentary supplies such as soaps and shampoos, then passing them on to needy non-profit agencies. Over the years groups like the Domestic Violence Intervention safe homes, John 3:15 Mission for men, the Muskogee VA hospital, and homes for unwed mothers have benefited from these supplies, which frees up much-needed funds for other uses. I am proud to be a part of this giving/worthy cause.



update

All in a Night's Work

by Sharon King

On August 11, 1998, a storm hit the Ozark area, causing an outage on the 161 kV line running between Ozark and Van Buren. The word came in from dispatch at approximately 4:30 p.m. that two structures on the line were down.

The Gore and Tupelo line crews worked through the night clearing the downed power line out of trees and rebuilding the structures. The crews made all repairs and returned the line back to service shortly after 7:00 a.m. the next morning.

Hats off to these employees for their hard work and dedication in working through the stormy night to restore this line. 💧

SPRA's 42nd Annual Customer Meeting

April 7-8, 1999

Downtown
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Tulsa, Oklahoma

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